

Credit Meadows Elementary School – School Council Minutes

January 2019

The meeting of the Credit Meadows School Council was called to order by Kelly McKee at 6:35pm on January 14th, 2019 in the Learning Commons.

Present Executive: Kelly McKee, Laura Fry, Patricia Tolton

Voting Members Present: Inga Layman, Jan Pettigrew, Kim Beck, Kerry Caton, Heather Britton

Non-Voting Members Present: Melanie Myers, Stephanie Long Henderson, Melissa Sklad, Barb O'Meara, Anita Lagundzija-deFreitas, Lena Federico

1. Welcome by Kelly McKee

- a. Thank you for everyone that helped with Christmas in the Meadows.
- b. Inga Layman will not be able to continue the Secretary position. Patricia Tolton came forth to take on the roll of Secretary.
- c. Approval of November Minutes, Laura Fry put forward the motion, Heather Britton seconded, all in favour.

2. Principles Report

- a. Anita thanked everyone that participated in Christmas in the Meadows it was a smooth running night, the CMES choir, band, and dancers, did amazing performances. Our CMES students were all very excited to perform. The event had many folks in attendance and the feedback from our school community was positive.
- b. At the CMES January Staff Meeting, CMES Staff looked at school data to see where students were performing well (strengths) and areas where we would like to see improvements (needs). Based on a variety of data and student results, it was determined that the School improvement plan focus for the 2019 – 2020 school year will continue to be on Math. The goal will be to focus on good instructional practices and high yield strategies in order to help close the gap to ensure our CMES students are achieving their best. We will also continue to focus on inclusion and equity practices. We want our school to be a safe, caring, nurturing environment, where all of our CMES students see themselves represented and feel they can achieve their personal best. One of our goals this school year was focusing on Indigenous Education. We wanted to increase our knowledge as educators, as well as, teach our students. An article was shared with staff, “Truth and reconciliation in your classroom”. The article was shared with staff to encourage everyone to start implementing strategies, educating ourselves and our students.
- c. Lena talked about the Character Ed initiatives; two events that are booked are Neema Children’s choir on Friday May 17th, 2019 which is Orphan children from Uganda. This is to help build awareness in our students. Lena has watched them

perform at her previous school. On Thursday March 21st, 2019 is Baba Williams, motivational speaker for anti bullying and character education through African drumming. This will involve the whole school split between multiple time slots AM grades 4-8 he brings with him 80 drums, we are going to try to borrow more from other schools, if we cannot borrow we will pair children up to use the drums he brings. Through music and drumming circles he talks about his personal experiences growing up in Africa. He talks about not being able to do anything on our own we do it as a community, you help me and I'll help you and we create change. Grade 3's 60 min presentation, hands on with the drums and k-2 in the PM developing drumming he will teach them some drumming sessions. The background of being a good person and anti-bullying message will come through in all sessions.

- d. Superintendent, Denise Heaslip, came for a visit. She stopped by classrooms, and our students were happy to share what they were learning.
- e. Grade 8's getting ready for Parent, Student, Information Night on January 17th, 2019. The high school visited our students in grade 8 earlier, and demonstrated what a math and language lesson looks like in Academic, Applied, and General course areas. The information will hopefully help students when they are making decisions about course selections. The guidance councillor will be present on the information night to answer any questions students or parents may have.
- f. Speeches are on Feb 6th, 2019 for Junior and Intermediate Divisions. Students can present in front of individual teachers or in front of the whole class. February 10, 2019 is the speak-off at the legion and students are divided into three categories, grades 1-3, grades 4-6, and grades 7-8. The first place person attends and a backup, second place person is ready to go in case the first person cannot make it.

3. Parking Lot

Administration shared that our parking lot has become increasingly busy and congested. Student enrolment is up, which is wonderful, three portables on site, and we have increased by one more kindergarten class this year. Over the last five years, we have done many things to help keep the increased traffic flow moving safely such as: encouraging our community to walk as we are a walking school, painted safety markings on the tarmac have increased and are repainted each year to help indicate where parking is permitted, arrows to show direction of traffic, fire route markings, and visual lines for students showing walking boundaries, signage has increased, high pylons, educating our students on safe travel, numerous messages out to the community, and Kiss and Ride information sent out and posted, police presence from time to time, and feedback from UGDSB staff who look after parking lots, etc. The congestion in the upper parking lot is causing student safety concerns as some parents, guardians, and visitors are not following the expectations around safe use of the upper parking lot. Vehicles are parking in no park zones, some cars left idling for long periods of time, vehicles blocking fire lanes, vehicles blocking thru lanes, vehicles parking in the entrance way to the drive way, and parked in the Kiss and Ride Zone. We have a

large number of people arriving an hour before dismissal causing congestion and pollution near our kindie yard. Buses coming back from day trips and cannot get into the parking lot. Our buses call administration to go out and pylon off the area in front of the school entrance. Vehicles park where it is marked as no parking at the entrance, causing site line issues for the buses and the buses cannot fit through the entry safely with cars parked on each side. We have many parking spots off our property where parents can safely drop students off. Crossing guards are at both ends of the property to cross students over. Parents can park and walk students on to Credit Meadows property as well. Many safety reminders have been sent out in the CMES Newsletters, and our CMES Website. We have shared our concerns with folks at our UGDSB who look after parking, CMES School Council (parents), our local police representative, the manager of the YMCA, and our Superintendent, Denise Heaslip.

At our recent school council meeting, the following items were discussed with parents in attendance.

- a. We used to only see issues with the parking lot around inclement weather days (rain, cold), but now we are seeing increased safety issues in the parking areas as they are becoming increasingly congested.
- b. We've tried to make improvements during this time, and when a change is made, usually we see improvements for the short term, but not the long term.
- c. Drop off in the morning doesn't seem to be as large of an issue, as parents are heading somewhere. The main parking problems starts with pick-up as people start arriving around 2pm.
- d. Trevor Favretto (UGDSB Representative, Parking Lots Portfolio) came at 2pm today to review our end of day dismissal and brought with him various "Routes to School Planners". He saw first-hand parents, guardians, visitors all lined up an hour before dismissal. People parked and leaving vehicles. Cars parked in the fire lanes, and cars parked in front of people in the upper parking lot who need to leave, but cannot due to being blocked in. Trevor will create maps for Credit Meadows, showing walking routes and times, as well as, an aerial view of all the places you can park to wait for your child, or parents can walk a short distance to meet their child at CMES. We are a walking school.
- e. Bike racks were also moved to both ends of the school to help with arrival and dismissal congestion.
- f. After discussions with CMES staff, our UGDSB representative, our Superintendent, and feedback from parents and our CMES Parent Council, a suggestion was made to shut down our parking lot due to the increased congestion, visitors not following the expectations, and most importantly, for the safety of our students during dismissal. This is not a unique situation to CMES, other schools in our area shut down their parking lots during arrival and dismissal times due to student safety. We will monitor morning drop off and make a decision later if safety is a concern for this time of day as well.

- g. We do not have extra staff to monitor people using the parking lot properly. Enough information has been sent out consistently over the years, signage is up, the purchase of tall pylons, increased safety line paintings on tarmac areas, we have had police present, but people are not following the expectations/rules.
- h. We are predicted to grow and see our enrolment continue to increase, we have the capacity for up to 6 portables.
- i. Bus drivers call the school to inform us that they cannot get into the parking area for school trips.
- j. Large issue with parents leaving cars and socializing, a few parents pick up children early to avoid the area, other parents picking kids up at 3:10pm to avoid congestion. Staff cannot stay later to do extra duty.
- k. Suggestion to ask the school board to bus children from the subdivision off Veterans Way, children from this subdivision cannot walk in the winter because the walk ways are not maintained in the winter. Parents may start to lobby the board to have kids living in this area that cannot walk to school be allowed to take a bus.
- l. Parents are able to park at the church to wait for their child.
- m. A discussion happened about rolling it out in phases:
 - i. Letter that goes out to everyone, including on CASL stating what the problem is and what the consequences will be if expectations are not followed.
 - ii. A suggestion was made to create a flyer and approaching people stating that they are not able to park in various places (Grandparents or others picking up children on a less frequent bases may not know of our pick up/drop off rules.). This can cause confrontations was raised.
- n. Inga suggested extending the North parking lot. This was looked at by the Board and could not happen for a number of reasons.
- o. Can the idling by-law be enforced? This is being looked into by Trevor.
- p. Can we have a regular Police presence? Police have supported the school in the past. People follow the rules when police are present but when they leave people go back to not following the rules.
- q. Council supports shutting down the parking lot during pick up time, drop off will remain open, for now.
- r. Parents for the YMCA pick up may have a pass to allow them in the parking area. YMCA parents usually drop off earlier and pick up later, the change may not impact them.
- s. Administration will send out information to the parent community to say when the change will happen. Walking route maps will be sent out, as well as, maps to show parking areas for parents, guardians, and visitors.
- t. Kindergarten children were doing DPA and Outdoor Learning at the end of the day which helped with a faster transition at home time for students and parents.

Administration will follow up with teaching staff to ensure this is happening consistently.

- u. Administration can pull a duty person from the yard (short term) and place the staff member in the parking lot to help with the new transition.
- v. Many years ago when the school population was higher we didn't have these pick up issues we are experiencing currently because more students walked to and from school.

4. Treasures Report

- a. Food days brought in almost \$13,000 for January & February.
- b. CITM expense were \$148, due to the Christmas store selling a lot of items that were purchased in previous years. Sarah did a great job with the store. Most of the crafts we used, we already had from previous events.
- c. Laura allocated \$8,000 for upcoming bills in the next two months, including trips that were approved last year. John McIntire was forgotten to put in so he was put in. That leaves us with \$8,500 of allocations.
- d. This year there was a deposit for the learning foundation of \$1,843.
- e. \$945 was in the school council from 2016 HST rebate, this year HST rebates will come into the school council account.
- f. There was \$2000 located from RBC for a donation in 2016 for our dance a thon.
- g. Laura to give direction that the freezer purchase (\$630 plus tax and \$25 removal fee for the old freezer) will be taken out of the learning foundation funds.
- h. 4 classes have put in requests for Scientists in the School money.

Kelly put forth a motion to approve the treasurer's report, Inga came forth and Jan seconded, all in favour.

5. Food Days

- a. Jan can organize food days, but can't attend all of them.
- b. We now have 6 adult volunteers for food days
- c. We have 5 students we are helping out through food days that we have identified as needing food during the day. Pizza was being provided to them, but not Pita Pit, we will be treating Lunch Lady Lunches the same as Pita Pit lunches because they are similar in pricing (more expensive than other lunches offered at the school). These students will receive lunches for all lunch days except for Lunch Lady and Pita Pit.
- d. If anyone is aware of anyone that can help out with food days to please direct them to Inga/Jan.
- e. Not a lot of kids order Pita Pit.
- f. Would like more feedback from Lunch Lady.
- g. Laura did some analysis of the lunches and we make a little more money on Lunch Lady than we do on Pita Pit

- h. Maybe in the future we can add a second food day if our food day volunteers increase.

6. Pro-Grant

- a. Lena confirmed that our Pro-Grant was approved by our superintendent, Laura does not see the approval on the website yet, she will follow up to ensure this is updated.
- b. Laura called Jarred at the ESQ, Waterloo to do a Stem night on Wednesday April 3rd. She will follow up with him via email on the events we chose on the Facebook Council poll.

7. School Yard Planning and Fund Raising Committee

- a. We will not get into all this tonight, it's a huge undertaking.
- b. There is a gentleman whose son goes to grade 8 and he is a safety inspector, has all the connections for government grants to get a school yard play ground.
- c. We need to get a committee together to figure out pricing and what we are wanting to see in the yard.
- d. We have to form a committee to organize our spring fundraising event. This will be mainly planned outside of School Council monthly meetings.
- e. The following have volunteered to be part of the committee, Kelly, Inga, Laura, Patricia, Jan, Stefanie, Melissa.
- f. We can utilize the Council Facebook page for ideas & communication.

8. Teacher Requests

- a. This request has been put forth by Lena Federico. Purchase 3 licences of Raz Kids to support K – 3 reading from levels A-Z, for \$350. We currently have this to support our resource students but we have been hearing from our primary division and teachers that they would like this for all K – 3 students. This is a great resource to have for all our kids, weather they are struggling with reading or are fluent readers all children will gain from this resource. They can listen to books, there is questions, comprehension and this can be used in the classroom as well as at home.
- b. Kelly advised that we as a council try to support the whole school K-8 when making decisions about supporting requests. Last year we supported Forrest of Reading for students in this school year, we originally declined supporting Forrest of Reading for next school year, but due to the extra funds found from RBC Kelly puts forth a motion to support Forrest of Reading (\$1,500) for next school year as well as Raz Kids (\$350). Inga put forth motion to approve, Kim seconded, all in favour.
- c. Outstanding, \$500 for Melanie Neil for band supplies, already approved \$500, but originally asked for \$1,000. Last year we gave her \$2,500. Anita to find out how much she really needs this \$500. If we have Arts days we will require \$5,000, and we will not have the dance-a-thon to raise this money.

- d. Anita has talked to Mr. McIntire and there is a succession plan in place so the band does not die.

Meeting adjourned at 7:58pm. Next meeting to be held in the learning commons February 11th, 2019 @ 6:30pm.

Minutes by: Patricia Tolton